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THE  
BOOK OF MORMON

WEIGHED  
IN THE BALANCES OF THE SCRIPTURES,  
AND FOUND WANTING.

A LECTURE  
DELIVERED AT COALVILLE,

DECEMBER 25, 1844.

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BY THOMAS JACKSON.

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“HE will there find (in the Book of Mormon) as positive testimony as has ever been found in the other Scriptures, concerning any truth which God ever revealed.”—VOICE OF WARNING.

“BUT though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”—PAUL.

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## LECTURE.

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EVERY age has been marked by its appropriate visitation of error, inflicted by the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience. As superstition and brute ignorance were the moral epidemics of the dark ages, so error appears to stand forward as the antagonist principle and opposer of that truth and light which have burst upon the minds of men in these more modern days. Never, perhaps, was there a time, when errors in religion, more various or more injurious, so awfully prevailed—when views the most visionary and unfounded were ever more greedily embraced, or with greater pertinacity retained—when old and oft-refuted heresies were more mischievously revived and propagated, with all the apparent freshness of youth and originality—when dogmas the most untenable were more perseveringly attempted to be vindicated by all the arts of subtle sophistry and mystification which are capable of being employed by the perverted powers and intellect of man. Never, perhaps, was there in any preceding age, a time when the truths of the Bible underwent so severe a scrutiny, or passed through so seven-fold heated an ordeal—when the oracles of God were ever more unblushingly misrepresented—when the peculiar doctrines of divine grace as centering in, clustering round, and deriving all their value, glory, and efficacy from the cross of Christ, were more grossly garbled or maligned by the multitude.

Whilst it is proverbial that truth is one and unchangeable, it is the essential property of error to be subject to ceaseless transformations. Her character is never fixed. Detected and exposed in one shape, she is compelled to pass through another metamorphosis. Her existence is a perpetual succession of changes; chameleon like, she has altered her hue and aspect frequently. Age after age, she has emerged from her native darkness, assuming various shapes and disguises, and age after age she has had her disguises torn off, and her nakedness and nativity exposed.

It is, however, a melancholy yet incontrovertible fact, that there are no new systems of error, extravagance, or enthusiasm, however flimsy, transparent, and hollow, but can find admirers and zealous partizans. And there are no new theories in this prolific age of theories, invention, and daring speculation, be they ever so false or ridiculous, but they

very frequently and successfully recommend themselves to the adoption of some of these avowedly incredulous, and yet evidently too credulous, minds.

Error in her most recent appearance has put on the uniform of Mormon; her high priests, apostles, elders, and priests, assuming the form of infallible wisdom, take their station in the high places of public concourse, and adopting too her language, say, "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." These men, who think themselves the oracles of the age, who are destined, as they hope, to deliver the soul and intellect of man from the debasing slavery of sectarian delusion, with which they deem the christian world to have been, as it were, spell-bound, now for more than fourteen hundred years! They suppose themselves qualified to decide upon the subject of unfulfilled revelation, and calculating, as they think, pretty accurately, symbolic numbers, and taking the scriptures according to their utmost literal meaning, these, amidst the jargon of a pretended "unknown tongue," and under pretence of the special manifestations of the Spirit, are expressing their own fears, and endeavouring to awaken the fears of others, as to the sudden and immediate *personal* appearance of Jesus Christ to judge the earth, and so, soon expecting the Saviour's kingdom and coming, they are from these visionary ideas, the subjects of more than ordinary apprehension.

In my opinion, the Mormonites, or Latter Day Saints, have imbibed many fatal errors, and none more so than the notions they entertain in reference to the *Book of Mormon*. They believe that the Bible is not complete, for it does not contain all the words of God, and that the Book of Mormon is God's new covenant with the children of men—that it is as much the word of God as the Bible, and contains "the fulness of the Gospel of Christ." That I am correct in this statement is evident from the following quotations from the "Voice of Warning," a book next in importance to the Book of Mormon. "If any nation," says the author, "obtain a revelation, it is their privilege to write it, and make a record of the same, and teach it to their children; and this record would be sacred, because it would contain the word of God; and thus it would be a HOLY BIBLE; no matter whether it is written by the Jews, the Ten Tribes, the Nephites, or the Gentiles. I would just as soon have the gospel written by Nephi, Mormon, Moroni, or Alma, as to have the gospel written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. Again, I would just as soon believe a revelation given in America, as to believe a revelation given in Asia." Speaking of the Book of Mormon, the author says, "But what are its proofs, as to chosen witnesses who testify to its translation by inspiration? For this testimony I refer the reader to the testimony of the witnesses in the first page of the Book of Mormon, he will there find as *positive testimony as has ever been found in the other scriptures, concerning any truth which God ever revealed.*" When I read this bold statement, I was determined to examine the book. I read it, and having done so, I resolved to express the opinion I had formed of its contents. I do so with no other feeling than to serve the truth, and promote the interests of Christianity. I seldom do interfere in such a way, nor should I have done so on the present occasion, had I not been fully convinced that there is a necessity. I

have been warned against taking this step; I have repeatedly been told it would add to my condemnation, and injure me in my circumstances. I am, however, the last man to be awed by such prophetic assertions.

“I’m not ashamed to own my Lord,  
Or to defend his cause,  
Maintain the honour of his word,  
The glory of his Cross.”

I know that if I strike at error, error will strike again. If I go and penetrate into the thickest of the forest, to find out the ravenous beast, I shall rouse the lion in his den, and he will come forth and roar, and shake at me his grisly mane; but in the name of eternal truth I defy him. Having made these introductory remarks, I shall proceed to establish the following proposition:—

THAT THE CLAIMS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON TO BE A REVELATION FROM GOD ARE UNFOUNDED.

This I shall prove—

I. *Because its authenticity is questionable.*

The character of the pretended translator in early life, the accounts which he has given of the visits of the angels to inform him where the plates were hid, and the way in which he deciphered them, are unfavorable. The testimony of those who had the means of knowing, leads us to suspect that all things are not right, and that he grossly imposed on many who ought to have known better. His father-in-law, in his affidavit, affirms it to be his conscientious opinion, from the knowledge he had of Smith and his companions, “that the whole Book of Mormon is a silly fabrication of falsehood and wickedness, got up for speculation, and with a design to dupe the credulous and unwary, in order that its fabricators might live upon the spoils of those who swallowed the delusion.” But supposing this is a misrepresentation of him, let us hear the testimony of his friends on his behalf. They say that he was a good man, was under deep concern for his soul’s safety, and was anxious to ascertain with whom he should have christian fellowship. For this purpose he made application to God in prayer, and was commanded not to join any religious sect. An angel appeared unto him, gloriously, three times in one night, directing him to go to a neighboring mountain, where he should find a stone chest containing golden plates, on which the will of God was written. He did as he was commanded, and on arriving at the memorable hill, in North America, he removed the soil from the edges of the box, and a light pry brought to his natural vision its contents. While he stood gazing and admiring, he beheld the devil and his angels. Smith, however, succeeded in getting the chest, and while proceeding home through the wilderness and fields, he was waylaid by two ruffians, who had secreted themselves for the purpose of robbing him of the sacred records. One of them struck him with a club before he perceived them; but being a strong man, and large in stature, with great exertion he cleared himself from them, and ran towards home; the men pursued him but could not overtake him.

Now the mystery is, Who told these men that Smith was gone in quest of a treasure, seeing that it had been revealed to him alone during

the nocturnal hours by an heavenly visitor? What mysterious messenger had been despatched to these highwaymen, to make known to them the unexpected discovery, that one Joseph Smith, jun., had that morning gone to a memorable hill, formerly called Cumorah, situated in Ontario county, township of Manchester, and state of New York, North America, and that there he would find in a repository, plates and records of an immense value, that he would return in the course of the day, carrying the precious boon, taking a certain direction on his way home. Such were the notions entertained by these ruffians of the value of the treasure Smith would have, that in their estimation it was of greater value than his life; and, therefore, in order to possess it, they resolved to make a bold and daring effort, even at the hazard of their necks. And be it observed, that these marauders were not in the wilderness in order to seize any traveller who might perchance pass that way, but they went there “for the *express purpose of robbing Smith of the records.*” (“Voice of Warning,” page 126.)

Were not these ruffians so called, Smith’s confederates? Had it not been previously arranged that they should, on the 22nd of September, go into the wilderness? That they should arm themselves with instruments of destruction—that one should strike Smith with a club, but take care not to hurt him—that a scuffle should ensue, but he must conquer—that a race should follow, but he must be allowed to take the lead? All these movements must be particularly attended to in order to bring the golden plates into notoriety, and with a view of making, if possible, an indelible impression on the public mind, that Smith had really got the plates in possession, and that neither the devil and his train, whom Smith saw on the hill, nor the highwaymen, who attacked him in the wilderness could wrest them from him. I would just as soon believe that the whole affair was planned by Smith and his associates, as I would believe that a celestial messenger appeared unto the former, assuring him that ancient engravings were deposited near the top of a distant hill.

With the sacred records was found a curious instrument, called by the ancients Urim and Thummim, which consisted of two transparent stones, clear as crystal, set in the two rims of a bow. Smith was not long before he commenced translating the record, by the gift and power of God, through the means of the Urim and Thummim; and, being a poor writer, he was under the necessity of employing a scribe to write the translation as it came from his mouth. The record was ultimately published as a new revelation from God, of equal authority with the Old and New Testaments. These records had been carefully deposited in the earth by Moroni, the son of Mormon, in the year of our Lord, 420; and the wonderful discovery was made on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1827, by Mr. Joseph Smith, jun., having lain concealed in a hole near the top of a hill for one thousand four hundred and seven years.

But the question is, who saw the plates that were competent to decide that they were engraven by the Holy Spirit, and that they contained the will of God to man? Who were they that compared the translation with the original, written in the reformed Egyptian cha-

racters, a language unknown to the Americans? What proofs were given that God was the author, and that signs followed to confirm this? These are questions which have not been and which cannot be satisfactorily answered. Smith's own friends plainly state that a more wild romantic tale was never told; written by Jews who had left the land of their fathers, and the plates on which the will of God had been engraven were concealed fourteen hundred years in a stone chest, on a mountain side; that the discovery was made by revelation, to a man utterly incompetent for the task of making them known to the world. It is a fabulous tale, a mere fiction; and my astonishment is, that any man of common understanding should listen to it one moment, for there is not one mark of credibility connected with the whole story.

We have heard the accusations of those who were unfriendly, and we have listened to the explanation of friends; let us now try the question on the principles of common sense. Suppose a witness should be brought into court to prove a fact which, he said, was true, and that he had documents in possession, which would place it beyond all dispute; but that he would not show them to his friends to examine them and report, and that he would not produce them in court to confirm his testimony. What opinion would the judge and jury form of his evidence? They would reject it as untrue, and the verdict would be against him. Thus it is with the pretended author of the Book of Mormon. The testimony of friends and of foes is against him; and the decision of common sense is, that the book is not only of doubtful origin, but it is unworthy of belief, and ought to be rejected as a wild fabrication; for a more gross delusion was never attempted to be imposed on men of understanding.

In reference to the plates, it is said that the size of them was about seven inches by eight in width and length, nearly as thick as common tin. They were filled on both sides with engravings in Egyptian characters, and bound together in a volume, as the leaves of a book, and fastened at one edge with three rings running through the whole.

Now it is well known by all learned men, that the Egyptian language takes up a very great deal of room, perhaps four times as much room as the English, and it is quite certain that as the book of Mormon contains nearly as much reading as the Old Testament, it would take at least *a thousand* plates to hold in the Egyptian language what is there written. Now a thousand plates of gold, of the thickness of the thinnest tin, would measure twenty inches instead of six; the weight would be somewhere about 400 pounds, and the value more than £25,000. As it regards the real author of the book, it is asserted as a fact, that the man who wrote the book of Mormon was the Rev. Solomon Spaulding. He lived at New Salem, in North America. He meant it for a tale, or religious drama; and he wrote it in 1812, to amuse himself and his neighbors. Mr. Spaulding afterwards went to live at Pittsburg, and there he showed what he had written to a printer, named Patterson, who wanted to print it, but Mr. Spaulding would not let him; Patterson, however, borrowed the writing, and after keeping it a long time, returned it to its owner. It is said that it was during the retention of the

manuscript that one Sidney Rigdon,\* who is now a Mormonite, was the late Prophet's translator, and it is said one of the twelve apostles, copied the book when he worked for Patterson. The Rev. Mr. Storms, of Holleston, in Canada, wrote to Mrs. Spaulding, or rather, to Mrs. Davidson, for she is married again, for facts relative to the manuscript in question, and she sent a letter to him, telling him all about it, and at the bottom of the letter there was a note from Dr. Ely, of Monson, in the United States, and from Mr. Austin, principal of Monson Academy, stating that Mrs. Davidson now lives at Monson, and is a humble christian woman, and would certainly say nothing but what is true; besides which, in America, there are many people living who remember hearing Mr. Spaulding read the story when he first wrote it in 1812. Thus it is clear that the first defect in the *New Bible* is, that it lacks authority. It is not supported by any satisfactory proof; it rests solely on the bare word of Joseph Smith and three or four of his confederates.

We now observe—

*That the Authenticity of the Scriptures is undoubted.*

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God." (2 Tim. iii. 16.)  
 "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter, i. 21.)  
 "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." (Heb. i. 1, 2.) "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify." (1 Peter, i. 10, 11.)  
 That God is the author of the bible is evident, because it contains statements which none but a God could reveal. Such as the nature of God—of angels—and of man—the mystery of the creation—the origin of evil—the end for which man was created—the immortality of the soul—the doctrine of the trinity—the incarnation of the Son of God—the mystical union of Christ and his members—future events to the end of time—and a future state of rewards and punishments. These and such like mysteries were beyond the reach of the most wise and learned men to invent; whence it is evident that the sacred penmen wrote not their own words, but what they were taught by the immediate inspiration of the Spirit.

The authenticity of the Scriptures is demonstrated upon the following grounds:—First,—That it is impossible to conceive they should ever have been received as authentic by any number of persons at any period of time, if they had not possessed all the necessary evidence and proofs of their having been true. Second,—That it is impossible to assign to the writers of these books any adequate motives for their undertaking on the supposition that they are not authentic. Third,—That there is nothing contained in these books which is contradicted by other and independent writers, possessing an accurate knowledge of the facts and

\* The following revelation was given to Joseph Smith, at Kirkland, Ohio, Feb. 4, 1831. "It is meet that my servant, Joseph Smith, Junior, should have a house built, in which to live and translate. And again, it is meet that my servant, *Sidney Rigdon*, should live as seemeth him good, inasmuch as he keepeth my commandments."—*Millennial Star*, Vol. V, page 49. This wonderful revelation needs no comment.

circumstances narrated in them. Fourth,—That they do not contain anything incredible in itself, or contradictory to the real nature of things. Fifth,—That they contain internal evidence of the fidelity of their authors, and of the facts and circumstances which they detail. Sixth,—That they receive ample testimony from external and independent sources of information. In the Scriptures, duties are prescribed which none but God can require; sins are condemned which none but God can prohibit; threatenings of punishment are denounced which none but God can inflict; promises of such rewards are made which none but God can bestow; and all in such a majestic way, as gives unquestionable proof of the DIVINITY OF THEIR ORIGIN. Having now weighed the Book of Mormon in point of *authenticity* with the sacred Scriptures, and found that it is wanting, we proceed to notice—

II. *That the claims of the Book of Mormon to Divine Inspiration are unfounded, because the CHARACTER OF THE BOOK IS BAD.*

The book begins with the religious adventures of Lehi and his family, consisting of his four sons; and of the family of Ishmael and his daughters, whom the sons of Lehi married. Alarmed by the threatenings of God against the Jews, in the reign of Zedekiah, they resolved to leave, and to seek a resting-place in America. Having forgotten to take the golden plates, Nephi, the youngest son, returned, to procure them from Laban, in whose possession they were. But when he refused to deliver them up, he was instigated by the Holy Spirit to take advantage of him, when in a state of intoxication, to unsheath his sword, to cut off his head, and to array himself in the clothes of the murdered man. By his appearance and voice he deceived the servant, caused him to bring out the plates, and compelled him to go with him into the wilderness, where he was safe. His brethren, when they saw him in the dress of Laban, were afraid and fled. The sword by which he had done the murderous deed, was much esteemed, preserved with care, and used on particular occasions. This man, who was a Jew, a prophet among his brethren, and a great writer, was also highly conceited of himself, and a murderer. The book begins with deceit and murder.

The pilgrims, leaving the place doomed to destruction, sojourned in the wilderness; where, among many privations, they subsisted eight years by their bows and arrows. They had a compass or ball having two pointers, inscribed with various intelligence, legible at proper times, and which was their index to guide them in the wilderness, and under its direction they travelled many, very many days, till at length they arrived at the great sea. Nephi, by divine direction, built a large ship, *without having any suitable materials*; not did he adhere to the ordinary rules of ship-building; but, notwithstanding the obstacles which he had to surmount, and the opposition of his unbelieving brethren, he completed his work, and launched his vessel, being assisted by the Holy Spirit. He got all his tribe, with their seeds, animals, and provisions safely on board, he sailed with a fair wind; and, under the guidance of the wonderful compass, he steered for the land of promise. But his brethren conspired against him, deprived him of liberty,

and treated him cruelly in his confinement. Then the compass ceased to direct; and a great storm arose, which lasted four days, and the wind being adverse and violent, they were in danger of perishing; and being alarmed they awoke Nephi, who prayed, and the wind ceased, the sea became calm, the ball began to point the right course, and, after many perils, and a long voyage, they arrived at the southwest of America, the promised goodly land.

After the death of Nephi, they quarrelled, separated, and fought many bloody battles, by which they were nearly exterminated. The remainder became Christians about 400 years before the birth of Christ, and worshipped God according to Gospel ordinances. The Redeemer, after his ascension, paid them a visit; and 2,500 put their hands into the prints of his nails and the wound of his side, and were baptized. All the inhabitants, in the year 36, were converted to God; and there was a perfect community of goods among them, and no disputations for 170 years. From the sects which sprung up, the divisions which took place, and the battles which were fought, goodness had left the land in the year 320. Three of the American Apostles, however, were never to die, and were seen 400 years after Christ; but what has become of them no man can tell.

Mormon appears next in the drama, the recording angel of the whole matter. He was a good christian, and a great general. He commanded 42,000 men against the Lamanites, and the battle was fought in the year 330. The Lamanites possessed South America, and the Nephites North America. Moroni finished what his father Mormon left undone, and continued his history to the year 400, just 1,000 years after Lehi had left Jerusalem. In the conclusion he says, that if his plates had been larger, he would have written in the Hebrew, but from this difficulty he wrote in the reformed Egyptian language, being handed down and altered unto us according to our manner of speech. "Condemn me not," says he, "because of many imperfections, neither my father, because of his imperfections, nor those who wrote before him; but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that you may learn to be wiser than we have been."

The most marvellous part is the tale of the people of Jared. Moroni, in the fifteenth and last book of Mormon, says, that the people of Jared escaped from the building of Babel, unconfounded in their language. They were directed in their journeyings through the wilderness, and were taught by God to build barges to cross seas; and, finally they built eight barges, air-tight, and of a peculiar construction. They were commanded to make a hole in the top to admit air, and another in the *bottom* for water! In these barges were sixteen windows of molten stones, two in each, which when touched by the finger of God, became transparent as glass, giving them light when under the mountain wave and on the sea. He that touched these stones appeared unto the brother of Jared, and said, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ, I am the Father and the Son." Two of these stones were sealed up with the plates, and became spectacles to Joseph Smith, according to a prophecy before Abraham was born!

He says that the eight barges, air tight, and made like ducks, after swimming and diving three hundred and forty-four days, arrived on the coast of America, the land of promise. They took possession of the country, built cities, and increased in wealth; but they disagreed, separated, and fought many bloody battles, so that more than two millions of men were slain, besides women and children; and finally, after having inhabited America for some fifteen hundred years, they were all slain but one, about eight hundred years before Christ; and he fell to the ground as one that had no life.

Who ever read of such a fiction? Who ever heard of the people mentioned in the Book of Mormon? Their cities and their battles are unknown to the world. The whole tale is wild and romantic, and unlike anything that takes place in the common affairs of life. I will venture to affirm that a more romantic tale was never invented and published than that which is contained in the Book of Mormon. The improbabilities are great, the marks of fiction are very evident; and therefore the claims to Divine Inspiration are not only unfounded, but awfully wicked.

*Let us now look at the* CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE.

The Sacred Volume is not a collection of moral and religious aphorisms, arranged in systematic order, and conveying in each of its sentences an immediately obvious and indisputable meaning. On the contrary, there is not another book in existence which embraces so great a variety of composition and style, and in which method and systematic arrangement are so little regarded. In the Bible we find general history, narratives, parables, prophecies, ethics, allegories, biography, proverbs, doctrines, laws, poetry, and other kinds of composition, following each other in rapid succession, and without any formal division. And there is as great a diversity of style among the writers, as there is variety in the subjects upon which they treat. The books of revelation were given to the world at various times, and on different occasions. The Bible is a collection of facts and inferences, of narratives and doctrines. It is equally adapted, at all times, to all ages, nations, and climates; so long as human nature remains the same, and so long as hope and fear, and joy and sorrow, and evil and good, and sin and holiness, characterise mankind. In that ever-blessed book we are taught the purest morality, perfectly accordant with the dictates of sound reason, and confirmed by the witness of our own conscience, which God has placed for himself in our breasts. Holiness is stamped upon every page. "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, and purified seven times." (Psalm xii. 8) They do not savour at all of anything that is earthly or impure. The law is holy, just, and good. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." (Psalm xix.)

Although many hundreds of thousands of books have been written in different ages by wise and learned men, even the best of them will

bear no comparison with the Bible, in respect either of religion, morality, history, or purity and sublimity of composition. Perhaps no man was ever better qualified to pronounce his judgment in this matter than the late Sir William Jones, who was one of the most learned men that ever lived. He says, "I have regularly and attentively read the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume independent of its divine origin, contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected, within the same compass, from all other books that were ever composed in any age or nation."

"A glory gilds the sacred page,  
Majestic like the sun ;  
It gives a light to every age,  
It gives but borrows none."

We have now in point of *character* weighed the Book of Mormon with the Sacred Scriptures, and found it wanting. We now remark—

III. *That the claims of the Book of Mormon to Divine Inspiration are groundless, because of the INSUFFICIENCY OF THE EVIDENCE.*

No man of common sense would believe any tale told him, without considering,—Is it likely, and what is the proof of its credibility? If it happened long ago, it must have the testimony of all succeeding ages; if the thing related took place in a distant country, we require the testimony of those on the spot, who are persons of truth, able to judge, and who do know the facts related to be true. Another thing would be, Is it probable? Have we ever heard or witnessed anything like it? This is the common-sense method of testing the truth of the tale.

Let us now try the Book of Mormon by these principles. According to the tale, it is 2,400 years since Lehi left Jerusalem for the land of promise, and about 4000 years since the people of Jared left Babel with their language unconfounded. They passed through the wilderness by divine direction, were taught to build barges having windows with molten stones in them, which, when touched by the finger of the Redeemer, gave them light when under the water; and, after swimming and diving three hundred and forty-four days, arrived on the southwest coast of that happy country, America.

But who ever heard of the pilgrimage of Lehi, and of his wonderful adventures? Who ever heard of the journey of the people of Jared, and of their extraordinary mode of navigation in that early age? Were these unknown to the rest of the world? Was there no person to record them for the information of future ages, and no book to transmit them to us that we might admire the wondrous dealings of the Most High with them? But that all these marvellous things should be buried in a stone chest 1,400 years, and then, in the year 1827, should burst forth on an astonished world, like a clap of thunder, without evidence, without a witness, is incredible. All those things recorded in the Book of Mormon happened in a distant country, and therefore we require the testimony of those on the spot, persons of integrity, able to judge, and whose veracity is not questionable from interested motives. But in

vain do we require such evidence, for there is not a living witness to be found; the whole is extinct, and if they did ever exist, they are now unknown. The inhabitants of the present day do not credit the statement of Smith and his companions. There is a declaration signed by a number of the respectable inhabitants of Palmyra, which shews what is their opinion of the Book of Mormon, and being on the spot, and acquainted with the circumstances connected, declare that they consider it to be a fiction, and do not believe a word of it.

Another thing is, that it is unlike anything that ever occurred in the experience of any people, in any country. It is unlike anything we have ever seen or known. It is scarcely equalled by the wildest flights of the novelist, by the marvellous exploits of the romance, and is hardly surpassed by the Koran, when Mahomet assures his followers that the angel Gabriel knocked at his door, and ordered him to mount the beast having sixteen wings, and that he flew with him quick as lightning. The book is full of marvellous things, and there is not a shade of evidence that they ever did take place.

It is true we have the testimony of three men, associates of Smith. They received a revelation that they were to be shown the plates, by an angel, and were to be the witnesses that the book was true. Their testimony must satisfy every candid inquirer that they were either deceived, or deceivers. The following is their testimony:—"Be it known to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it to us, wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we do testify that we have seen the engravings that are upon the plates, and they have been shewn unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare, with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon. And we know that it is by the grace of God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvellous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens."

When I first read this awful, daring, and presumptuous testimony, an indescribable feeling crept over my frame. I was horror-struck: I trembled for the men who had the hardihood to forge the name of God, to give currency to their wicked fancies.

Never was there any testimony more unsatisfactory; for these men do not state that they were acquainted with the reformed Egyptian language engraven on the plates of gold, or that they compared the

translation with the original, to ascertain that it had been made correctly. They only saw the plates, and vouch for their existence. Never was any evidence procured in such an extraordinary manner. An angel from heaven shewed them the plates, which were in the possession of Smith, who ought to have produced them, that they might have been rationally convinced that there was no imposition, and that all things were true, as asserted. If there be any who are satisfied with such evidence, they are to be pitied for their weakness; for the proof is as great a fable as the book, and would not be received in any court. It can only be regarded as the evidence of interested men, who would sacrifice principle for interest, truth for falsehood, to secure their own selfish purposes. When the evidence is examined, it ought not only to awaken suspicion that all is not right, but to satisfy us that the book is not of God, but of man; that it has no claim to revelation, but ought to be classed with the fictions of the day.

*Let us now examine the EVIDENCES OF THE BIBLE.*

These are two-fold: *External and Internal*. Among the *external* evidences of the Bible we might enumerate:—The testimony of the Jews; contemporary writers; subsequent witnesses; testimony of heretical sects, and opponents of revelation; early translations; *miracles*; and *prophecies*. We shall notice the two last.

*Miracles*.—We acknowledge that God created all things, and instituted those general laws by which the order of nature is regulated and maintained; and miracles are supernatural infractions of those general laws, and changes in that order. Every reasonable theologian will allow that no *creature* can possess any inherent, independent power of controverting the designs or of interrupting the harmonious arrangements of an omnipotent God; and hence it follows that all true miracles are to be regarded as the especial work of God himself. The Bible was attested by supernatural events, of which the Deity was the sole and immediate author; a fact to which nothing similar can be predicated either of Mahometanism, Mormonism, or of any of the religious systems of the heathen.

*The Bible, therefore, and the Bible only, is the word of God.*

The following are a few of the miracles which were wrought in confirmation of Divine revelation:—The conversion of the rod of Moses into a serpent; the budding and blossoming of Aaron's rod; the plagues of Egypt; the dividing of the Red Sea, and the memorable Jordan; the pillars of the wilderness; the smitten rock; the standing still of the sun upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon; the manna which fell round the camp of Israel; the falling walls of Jericho; the raising of the dead; the calming of the boisterous sea; and the healing all manner of diseases. These miracles were wrought in a great variety of situation and manner. In Egypt, in the wilderness, at Jerusalem, in different parts of Judea and Galilee, in cities and villages, in synagogues and private houses, in streets and highways, before multitudes, in the presence of friends and of enemies, before the noble and ignoble, learned and unlearned.

That the testimony of inspired writers on the subject of these mira-

cles was true, must be allowed, for the following plain reasons:—1. Because it was the *accordant* testimony of numerous witnesses. 2. Because the written records of these supernatural events abound in the internal marks of simplicity, candor, and entire fidelity. 3. Because on the one hand the miracles to which the inspired penmen bore witness were of such a nature that they could not possibly have been themselves deceived respecting them; and, on the other hand, the real integrity and goodness which these persons displayed, absolutely preclude the supposition that they intended to deceive others. 4. Because they confirmed the truth of their testimony by lives of unexampled self-denial, and by a willing submission to innumerable sufferings, and even to the infliction of death itself. 5. Because, in further proof of the truth of their declaration, they were enabled to work miracles themselves.

The next *evidence* to which I shall direct your attention is PROPHECY.

It is a clear and undeniable position, that the actual knowledge of the future is an attribute peculiar to the Divine Being. No one, who admits the existence of the one God, will refuse to allow that, in point of both knowledge and power, he is placed at an infinite distance above all his creatures—that, while he regulates the course of events according to his own will, none of those creatures are his counsellors, and none of them are capable of penetrating his secret designs and intentions. From these premises, it follows that all prophecies which, by their actual fulfilment, are proved to have proceeded, not from intellectual sagacity and human conjecture, but from actual fore-knowledge, must have been inspired or dictated by the Almighty himself; and, farther, that those writings which are attested by such prophecies are divine in their origin. Hence the Almighty challenges all pretended deities, saying, “Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what *shall happen*; let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them: or declare *things for to come*. Shew us the things that *are to come* hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.” (Isaiah xli. 21—23.) This is a test which no imposture can endure; and this evidence has peculiar advantage in that it is a growing one as prophecy becomes more and more fulfilled.

To justify their pretensions to their contemporaries, the sacred penmen referred, on particular occasions, to some approaching circumstance, as a proof of their prophetic spirit, and as a symbol or representation of a more distant and important event. They could thus be distinguished, in their own age, from false prophets, if their predictions were then true; and they ventured to raise, from succeeding ages of the world, that veil which no uninspired mortal could touch. They prophesied of the advent of the world’s Redeemer, the time and place of his birth, his life and labors, his sufferings and death, his resurrection and ascension; and of the descent of the Holy Spirit. They minutely described the desolation of cities and of nations whose greatness was

then unshaken, and whose splendor has ever since been unrivalled; such as Egypt, Tyre, Nineveh, Babylon, Chaldea, Lebanon, Gaza, Eshkelon, Ekron, Philistia, Edom or Idumea, Moab, Ammon, Samaria, the cities of Judea, the land of Judea, the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jewish nation, the calling of the Gentiles, and the rapid and triumphant spread of the Gospel.

*We shall now notice the INTERNAL EVIDENCE of the Scriptures.*

The sacred Scriptures exhibit various and powerful evidences of the fidelity of their respective authors; internal marks of sincerity and truth that are not to be found, and could not possibly exist, in any forged writings. A few particulars may be briefly noticed. Their *style* and *manner* exhibit the most convincing evidences of truth and sincerity. The particularity with which the inspired penmen have noted minute circumstances of time, person, place, &c., affords a very strong evidence of the truth of their writings. Another and a very cogent argument for the authenticity of the Bible arises out of the *harmony* which subsists among the sacred writers on the various subjects of which they treat. Should a number of contemporaries, of the same country, education, habits, profession, natural disposition, and rank in life, concur in writing a book on religious subjects, as large as the Bible, each furnishing his proportion, without any comparing of notes, the attentive reader would be able to discover—could not fail to discover, some diversity of opinion among them. But the penmen of the Scriptures were not on an equality in these respects; and yet there is something peculiarly delightful in the harmony of their productions. Though born in different parts, and separated from each other by an interval of many hundred years, residing in distant lands, situated amidst various and opposing circumstances, their natural abilities, education, habits, and employments were exceedingly dissimilar, yet all speak one language, all inculcate the same precepts and the same creed. Kings, priests, heroes, sages, mechanics, husbandmen, shepherds, fishermen, all think and speak alike. Historians, legislators, and biographers, all maintain the same general principles; confirming, harmonizing with, and illustrating each other. They wrote laws, history, prophecy, odes, devotional exercises, proverbs, doctrines, parables, and controversy; and each one had his distinct department. Yet they all exactly coincide in their statements of facts, and in the exhibition which they give us of the perfections, works, truths, and will of God; of the nature, situation, and obligations of man; of sin and salvation; of this world and the next.

“Whence, but from *heaven*, could men unskilled in arts,  
In different nations born, in different parts,  
Weave such agreeing truths? or how, or why,  
Should *all* conspire to cheat us with a lie?  
Unasked their pains, ungrateful their advice,  
*Starving* their gains, and martyrdom their price.”

Having now weighed the Book of Mormon with the Scripture, as it regards *evidence*, and again found it wanting, we proceed to notice—

IV. *The claims of the Book of Mormon to Divine Inspiration are unfounded, because it is UNSCRIPTURAL IN DOCTRINE.*

1. As it regards the *Almighty*.

The following representations of the Almighty are unbecoming his character, and derogatory to his nature—"God framed the worlds by faith, that it is by faith that he exercises power over them, and faith is the principal of power, it must be so in man, as well as in the deity. Had it not been for the principle of faith the worlds would never have been framed, neither would man have been formed out of the dust. Take this principle or attribute from deity, and *he would cease to exist!* The principle of power which existed in the bosom of God, by which the worlds were framed, was faith, and it is by reason of this power existing in the Deity, that all created things exist; so that all things in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, exist by reason of faith, as it existed in him." Again—"What kind of a being is God? Ask yourselves. I again repeat the question, what kind of a being is God? What sort of a being was God in the beginning? Open your eyes and hear all ye ends of the earth. God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, is *a man like unto one of yourselves, that is the great secret!* I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined that God was God from all eternity. God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did. What did Jesus say? Jesus said, as the Father hath power in himself, even so hath the Son power. To do what? Why what the Father did. The answer is obvious. In a manner to lay down his body and take it up again. Jesus, what are you going to do? To lay down my life, as my Father did, and take it up again." Hear the translator once more. "You have got to learn how to be gods yourselves, the same as all gods have done. The head one of the gods brought forth the gods in the grand council. I with boldness proclaim from the house tops, that God never did have power to create the spirit of man at all!"

How different are the representations of the Almighty in the Sacred volume. There we learn that God exists of himself in the most independent manner—that he is a spirit invisible and immortal—that his duration is eternal, without beginning or end; and permanent, without progression or succession—that he is unchangeable in his nature and designs. Immense, being present everywhere. Omniscient, knowing all things, past, present, and future, in a minute and perfect manner. Infinitely wise, to contrive what he pleases in the most skilful manner. Almighty, and able to do whatsoever he pleases. Ineffably happy in himself, and the fountain of all happiness. Most Holy, and opposite to all moral impurity. Inflexibly just, and disposed to require for himself, and render to every one of his creatures, what is right and equal. He is Love, being patient, long suffering, and slow to punish his enemies; merciful and full of compassion to the distressed, gracious and ready to forgive the unworthy. Faithful, speaking what is strictly true, and punctually fulfilling everything that he has said. Unsearchable and glorious above human comprehension. That he incessantly upholds the works of his hands, as the unwearied preserver of man and

all inferior creatures. He constantly observes all his creatures, and minutely inspects their particular circumstances, operations, and thoughts. He possesses all things as his own. He continually governs all his creatures, by particular laws adapted to their several different natures; and directs, limits, and overrules all their manifold operations, in the most particular, skilful, sovereign, and righteous manner. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" (Exodus xv. 11.)

2. The Book of Mormon is unscriptural, as it regards the *plan of a sinner's acceptance with God*.

The soul-inspiring doctrine of a sinner's acceptance with God, as recorded in the Scriptures, is not to be found in the Book of Mormon. There we find that the remission of sin is obtained, not by faith in the blood of atonement, but by obeying the commandments, or application to the water. It does appear that the Saints do attach too much importance to their being baptized; and if we may judge from their avowed principles and practice, they seem to imagine that it will operate as a charm. No man or woman can be pardoned, regenerated, adopted into the family of God, receive the witness of the Spirit, or enjoy pure religion, until they are plunged into the water. Baptism is only a sign, and not the thing signified. When the baptists submit to immersion, it is done as an *effect* of pardon, but never as the *cause*—as the *fruit* of acceptance, but never as the *condition*. The right of baptism cannot save—"Circumcision availeth nothing, neither uncircumcision, but a new creature."

"Were we baptized a thousand times,  
It would be all in vain;  
It cannot wash away our crimes,  
We must be born again."

If we build our hopes of acceptance with God on anything in us, or done by us, we are awfully mistaken, and in a perilous situation.

What saith the Scriptures on this deeply interesting subject:—"Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that *believe* are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through *faith in his blood*." "To him that worketh not, but *believeth on him that justifieth* the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. See Eph. ii. 8, 9.

"Christ is the way,  
The *only* way to God: whoever seeks  
By other ways to enter, must ashamed,  
Confused, and disappointed see too late,  
The gates of hell expanded to his view!  
No *other* name is published under heaven,  
Wherein salvation can be found, but *HIS*."

3. The Book of Mormon is unscriptural as it regards the *nature of saving faith*.

Faith is made to be an attribute of Deity, and a property in man. This is evident from a quotation already made. Take another: "Faith

is the great governing principle, which has power, dominion, and authority over all things; by it they exist, by it they are upheld, by it they are changed, or by it they remain, agreeably to the will of God. Without it there is no power, and without power there can be no creation or existence." Moroni, the son of Mormon, speaking of the effects of faith, says,—“It was the faith of Nephi and Lehi that caused a change to be wrought upon the hearts of the Lamanites, when they were immersed with the Holy Spirit and with fire—that it was by faith that the mountain Zerim was removed by the brother of Jared, who spoke in the name of the Lord.”

Faith in Christ is necessary to salvation. For he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Without faith it is impossible to please him. Of Christ, give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins. To every true penitent the gospel message is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. By faith in general we understand a hearty belief of the whole system of revealed truth, aided by divine operation; and by *justifying faith*, a firm and implicit reliance on the atonement made by Jesus Christ, for them and all mankind, when he died upon the cross—a sure trust and confidence which a man hath that God hath forgiven his sins, justified his person, and accepted him into his favor, for the merit of Christ’s death and passion. This “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” By it we are made the children of God: we are pardoned, regenerated, receive the witness of the Spirit, and are filled with peace and joy.

4. The Book of Mormon is unscriptural as it regards the *miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit*.

That the Mormonites profess to possess the miraculous powers is evident from the following:—“No sooner did the people begin to believe their testimony and be baptized, than the Holy Ghost fell on them, through the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus; and the heavens were opened, and while some had the ministering of angels, others began to speak in other tongues and prophecy. From that time forth many were healed by the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus, for these signs follow them that believe; and when a man believes the truth through the testimony of God’s witnesses, and then these signs follow not only them, but him also; if he has the ministering of angels, if he has been healed, or heals others, by the laying on of hands in Jesus’ name, or if he speaks in other tongues, or prophecies, he knows it for himself.” “And whosoever among you are sick, and have not faith to be healed, but believe, shall be nourished with all tenderness, with herbs and mild food. And the elders of the church, two or more, shall be called in, and shall pray for and lay their hands upon them in my name, and if they die, they shall die unto me, and if they live, they shall live unto me. And again, it shall come to pass, that he that hath faith in me to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed: he who has faith to see, shall see; he that hath faith to hear, shall hear; the lame who has faith to leap shall leap.” The following are amongst the gifts to which the saints lay claim:—Healing the sick—working miracles—prophecy—divers kinds of tongues—interpretation of tongues—discerning of spirits—casting out devils—taking up serpents—drinking any

deadly thing without injury, &c., Cor. xii. 4—11, Mark xvi. 17—20. These gifts, the Saints say, left the church about fourteen hundred years ago—during which time the gospel has not been preached to either Jew or Gentile. But that in these last days, God has renewed his covenant, and has made with them a new and everlasting covenant—that they are the only true church—and that the fact of their possessing the miraculous gifts is a proof that they possess pure religion, and that too in a very high degree—that they are witnessing for God against the world and an apostate church.

How does the matter really stand then? I myself have never seen a miracle performed. I have no power to work a miracle. There is no evidence of any miracle having been wrought in this town. I suppose there are none of you who are, in this respect, more highly favored than myself on this subject, however, I remark—First—There is no intimation in the New Testament of a perpetual race of apostles; or of any other institution for the bestowment of miraculous powers. Secondly—There are several circumstances connected with the New Testament, and several passages in it, which imply the discontinuance of miraculous powers. Thirdly—The pretensions to miraculous powers in every age, since that of the apostles, are on the same level with one another; yet none of these will stand the tests by which we judge of the reality of the primitive miracles. Fourthly—All the purposes of the christian dispensation have been at various times accomplished, without the interposition of any miraculous gifts whatever. Fifthly,—The scriptures contain solemn and impressive warnings to Christians not to be led away by persons professing to work miracles. Sixthly—The Scriptures invariably give the superiority of moral and established means of persuasion over those which are sensible and new. Seventhly—The possession of any or of all these miraculous gifts was not necessarily connected with genuine religion. Eighthly—The possession of miraculous gifts is far from being a safe test by which to judge of the prosperous condition of the church in any place or in any age. Ninthly—There is a want of suitable and sufficient evidence of the asserted fact, that such gifts are in existence. Tenthly—Besides the failure in evidence of the reality of these gifts, the manner of their exercise is contrary to the directions of the New Testament. Eleventhly—The whole theory and practice of these manifestations is supported by the most egregious misapplication of particular texts of Scripture. We cannot now enter upon an illustration of these facts; but proceed to notice

5. *The continuance of the Melchisedec and Aaronic orders of the priesthood is unscriptural.*

The Mormonites have not only twelve Apostles, but seventy high priests, and priests in abundance. They have all been called of God, as was Aaron. They are the only authorized ministers; all others are interlopers. What priestly assumption. They only are right, all others are wrong. What popish bigotry. All Missionaries are in error. The Moravians, who led the van in missionary operations, who submitted to toil with the enslaved sons of Ham, in order to make them savingly acquainted with the liberty of the cross, and who planted religion in fields of ice, and watered it in eternal snow, were all wrong. The noble band of ambassadors, who followed in the wake, and who, at the hazard of their lives, sought out the benighted, miserable, and infatuated idola-

ters, were all wrong. Those holy, disinterested, persevering, self-denying laborious men of God, who are giving arts, and industry, and civilization, to the most distant nations of the earth; who are raising a beautiful spectacle to the eye, amidst the wilderness around them, who are giving piety, and virtue, and intelligence to the prowling savages of Africa, and extending among the wildest of nature's children the comforts and the decencies of civilized life, are all wrong. Those heaven-born missionaries, who have made a sacrifice of ease, and home, and a thousand endearing associations, in order to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus, are all deluded. Men who have carried the word of life from the Thames to the Tiber, from the shores of Greenland to the burning sands of Africa, from the Atlantic to the voluptuous Ganges,

From East to West, from pole to pole,  
As wide as winds can blow, and waters roll,

have all labored in vain, and spent their strength for nought. Yes, those very men who have borne the heat and burden of the day, who are suffering hunger in inhospitable countries, and pining in unhealthy climates,—because the love of Christ constrained them to seek the wandering sons of men—are all deceived. In fine, all ministers of the Gospel, both at home and abroad, are wandering in error's maze, and will continue to do so, until they are willing to be called to the priesthood by the pontifical authorities created by Joseph Smith, when he modelled a new hierarchy, according to his fantastic notions, and wild imaginings. All his successors, forsooth, are right, because they have been called of God, as was Aaron. They are of the Aaronic order of the priesthood. Now before a man could be of that order, certain *qualifications* were necessary. He must be of the tribe of Levi, his genealogy must be well authenticated, he must be free from bodily infirmities and defects, he was not to touch wine or strong drink, he was to avoid touching any dead body, was not to mourn for the dead. He must have *sacerdotal vestments*, such as fine white linen, the ephod, breastplate, precious stone, curious girdle, golden bells, pomegranates, mitre, Urim and Thummim. He must be *consecrated* in the following manner,—washed with water, anointed with oil, and consecrated with blood. To talk of being of the order of Aaron, without attending to these things, is consummate folly.

In the New Testament there are no priests from *office*, but all the saints are priests, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. The priests under the law were typical of Christ—they were a shadow of things to come—but the body (or substance) is of Christ. The darkness has passed away, and a clearer revelation of mercy has succeeded. Every shadow has received its substance, and every type its truth, in the person and work of Christ. St. Paul, in Heb. x. 12, 13, exhibits Christ and his sacrifice, as the end of all that had gone before; shewing, at the same time, for the establishment of such Hebrews as were in danger of returning to Judaism, the obvious superiority of Christ's character and office above all that had gone before. See verses 1—11. Speaking of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations he says, "For if that which was DONE AWAY was glorious, much more that which REMAINETH is glorious." (2 Cor. iii. 11.) The Mosaic economy was glorious, whether you refer to the principles it inculcated, or the

typical significancy of the rites and ceremonies it appointed, or the illustrious support it received from the attestation of miracles, and the instrumentality of prophets. There is, however, a superior glory connected with the Christian dispensation. This is evident, from the clearness of the revelation given by it, concerning those truths which are most important to human salvation—from the spirituality of its nature—from the universality of its design, and from the perpetuity of its duration. Those who wish to restore the Aaronic order of the priesthood, are ignorant of Christ's kingdom, the character of his subjects, and the design of the ministerial office, under the dispensation of the Spirit. They are setting aside the order of the New Testament, and introducing a system which bears evident marks of human contrivance.

6. *The salvation of lost souls is a doctrine propagated by the Latter Day Saints.*

Another of the baneful doctrines of the Mormonites is that of a purgatory, or a state in which, after death, sins may be removed, and a sinner prepared for heaven. This is a favorite part of the popish system. It has been productive of immense profit to the Romish priests, and of incalculable mischief to the souls of men. Nothing can be much more calculated to encourage mankind to persevere in their iniquities than a belief that if they should not be prepared for heaven at death, they may have their sins forgiven in the other world. Yet such is the doctrine of purgatory among the papists; and such is the unscriptural doctrine propagated by the Latter Day Saints.

Whether the notorious translator, Joseph Smith, found this doctrine in the Book of Mormon, or received it by revelation, I am not prepared to say. He made it known as the doctrine of God. These are his words:—"Those revelations which will save our dead will save our bodies; and God reveals them to us in view of no eternal dissolution of the body; hence the responsibility, the awful responsibility, that rests upon us in relation to our dead; for all the spirits who have not obeyed the gospel in the flesh, must either obey the gospel or be damned. Is there nothing to be done: no salvation for our fathers and friends who have died and not obeyed the decrees of the Son of Man? What kind of characters are those who can be saved, although their bodies are decaying in the grave? *The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us, is to seek after our dead!* All sins and all blasphemies every transgression, except one, that man can be guilty, there is salvation for him either in this world or the world to come. Hence God hath made a provision, that every spirit in the eternal world, CAN BE FERETTED OUT AND SAVED! Every man who has got a friend in the eternal world can save him, unless he has committed the unpardonable sin; and so you see how far you can be a saviour!" Well done POPE SMITH. Surely the Saints, after this daring, anti-scriptural, fatal, and presumptuous declaration, will cease to charge the members of different denominations with belonging to mystic Babylon, seeing that they themselves are so nearly allied to the mother of all abominations in point of doctrine.

"I know the Scriptures;" says this would-be distinguished prophet, I understand them (?) I said no man can commit the unpardonable sin, after the dissolution of the body, but they must do it in this world; (what a wonderful discovery) hence the salvation of Jesus Christ was wrought for all men in order to triumph over the devil; for if it did not

catch him in one place, it would in another" If you do not believe it, you do not believe the bible; if you do not believe it, you do not believe the learned men of God; no man can learn you more than what I have told you." "We are aware that to modern religionists this is an incomprehensible subject; (yes, and to ancient religionists, too) but to those who have entered into covenant with God, and have learned of the things of the kingdom, it will be a source of unmingled gratitude and joy, and should call forth the grateful feelings of every heart, to reflect that our glorious Redeemer has wrought out a salvation so ample, as to make it possible to save every one in time or eternity, who has not committed the unpardonable sin." On the strength of this limb of popery, it is said that certain saints in this neighbourhood have already been baptized for the dead!

The subject of a future state of rewards and punishments, is one of the greatest importance, because on it is suspended our everlasting destiny, and in it are involved our dearest interests beyond this short and transitory state of being. We believe that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, and that a day of final retribution *will* arrive; and this we may argue from the universal and concurring testimony of mankind in every age—from the vast and amazing powers of the human soul—from the unequal distribution of good and evil in the present state; and from the decided declarations of the word of God. The proceedings of the last day, and the effects of its decision in the misery or happiness of every individual of the human race, are depicted in the Sacred Scriptures, in the most glowing colors and in the most affecting manner, so as to leave not the shadow of a doubt on the mind of him who believes the Bible, upon this all-important subject. There is a day approaching when strict justice shall be rendered to every individual. Virtue shall shine forth in her native lustre, immortal and divine; and vice shall be clothed with everlasting shame and confusion. The BIBLE, (and not the romantic ravings of the self-conceited, infatuated imposter of America) is the foundation of our creed. In that Book we learn that the wicked shall be ignominiously banished from the celestial presence and felicity of the glorious Redeemer; they shall be bound, cast into outer darkness, and shut up in the horrible society of the devil and his angels; they shall be tormented with unquenchable fire and brimstone; and their misery shall be aggravated by a guilty upbraiding of conscience, which shall gnaw them as the worm that dieth not. The avenging wrath of Almighty God shall abide on them without the least forbearance of mercy; they shall have the most exquisite sense of their torments, and their unutterable anguish shall cause them to weep, and wail, and gnash their teeth; the punishment of the wicked shall be continued for ever, without any remission or possibility of deliverance. On the contrary, however mean and despised the righteous may have been while on earth, they shall, at the last day, be elevated to the possession of immortal honours, and be invested with dignity and glory far surpassing our most sanguine thoughts.

But enough. Although I feel myself in a position somewhat like that of the prophet Ezekiel (chap. viii.) in the chambers of imagery, and hear a voice, saying, "Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations," yet I must conclude for the present, and hope my brethren will now suffer a word of exhortation.

MEN AND BRETHREN,—I have laid before you the authority, character, evidences, and doctrines of the Book of Mormon; and the authenticity, character, evidences, and doctrines of the Sacred Scriptures. It is now for you to say whether you give credence to that bold assertion quoted at the beginning of this lecture, viz., “That you will find in the Book of Mormon as positive testimony as has ever been found in the other Scriptures, concerning any truth which God ever revealed.” We have carefully looked for satisfactory testimony, for convincing attestations, for indubitable evidence, for sound doctrine, but we have looked in vain, and are compelled to write “TEKEL” upon the book; believing, as we most sincerely do, that it bears evident marks of a modern production.

Let the heathen and pagans idolize their “*Shasters*”—let the Mahometans admire their “*Koran*”—let the Roman catholics venerate their “*Traditions* and *Relics*”—let the socialists glory in their “*New Moral World*”—let the Latter Day Saints give credence to the fictitious “*Book of Mormon*,” but cleave ye to the Bible, to that book which is at once the foundation of your hopes, and the charter of your salvation. “It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” It has been the text book of the Christian Church for eighteen centuries. Volumes without number have been published upon it, and still it is as fresh and interesting as when it was given to the world. Years diminish nothing of its information, abate nothing of its force, reduce nothing of its excellency. Accident has no power over it, persecution is unable to injure it. It has stood against a host of enemies; they have spoken, they have written, they have conspired against it—they have ridiculed it, and exhausted upon its contents the entire quiver of malignant art, envenomed blasphemy, and vulgar buffoonery; but their attacks have served to demonstrate its invulnerability. It has stood against a host of pretended friends, who like Mahomet and Joseph Smith, have availed themselves of its contents to give currency to their forgeries; but it has borrowed nothing from friendship. It stands unaltered, and uninjured; like its Author, “the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.”

The universe shall pass away,  
Earth, ocean, vanish like a bubble,  
The Book of Mormon shall decay,  
And all his records turn to stubble;

but the Word of God abideth for ever.

You have received it in solemn trust from your fathers. Commit it to your children and your children's children; charging them, before the Lord, that they never allow any new revelation to rival it in their affections.

Be valiant for the truth. Prize your Bibles more than thousands of gold and silver. Search the Scriptures daily, with more unvarying punctuality, with greater attention, with more earnest prayer for additional insight into its spiritual meaning. Seek, with greater solicitude, to have clearer and more enlightened views of the whole system of revealed truth. Beware of new doctrines, and pretended new lights. Generally they are nothing else but the scintillations of error; mental meteors, generated by the corrupt imaginations of perverted minds. They

may appear luminous ; but the light they emit tends first to dazzle, then delude, and ultimately to destroy. Thousands have sunk into the abyss of misery in this way, by following these false lights of human opinion, instead of the guidance given by the Star of Bethlehem's beams. Seeing then, that this is such an age of inquiry, of errors and extremes, when there is such constant collision between truth and error, avail yourselves of every aid to defend, by legitimate weapons, and by the invincible force of truth, the outworks of Christianity. Let every Christian use all possible means to become more thoroughly acquainted with the internal and external evidences of our holy religion ; that your faith may not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." Thus, "be ready always to give to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. " Believe not every spirit ; but try the spirits. Many false prophets are gone out into the world " and, "if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect." " If any man come unto you, and bring not the doctrine of Christ, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, lest ye be partakers of his evil deeds." " Hold fast your profession." " Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." " Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Let your language be,

" Should all the forms which men devise  
Assault my faith with treach'rous art,  
I'd call them vanity and lies,  
And bind the Bible to my heart."

What said the Saviour, at the winding up of the sacred canon, when he gave the last touch, the finishing stroke, to the Old and New Testaments? Hear Him :—" For I testify unto every man, that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book ; and if any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

" Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, *think on these things.*"

## APPENDIX.

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Since the delivery of the foregoing lecture, the writer is happy to say that cheering accounts have reached him from different quarters, in reference to the good effect which was produced at the time on the minds of certain individuals, whose feet had well nigh slipped into the meshes of Mormonism; and he sincerely prays that the reading of it, under the blessing of God, may tend to prevent numbers from being carried away by a delusion unparalleled in modern times, and to the recovery of such as have sunk into the fearful vortex.

On Tuesday last, (Jan. 7) Priest Heafield, and Elder (alias Minor) Margetts, called upon me at my house, and invited me to a public discussion. I declined the offer. In doing so, I was not moved by fear, but guided by the dictates of common sense. Both the priest and the elder conducted themselves in a very unbecoming manner. So much so, that I was obliged to rebuke the Elder sharply. In the course of conversation, he gave me to understand that all sects of Christians were wrong, stating the number of sects; forgetting, I presume, that the Latter-day Saints or Mormonites are the most sectarian of any sect in Christendom. The ministers of the different sects were preaching for money. As for himself, he said, he never received one penny of any man for services performed. I asked him how he obtained a maintenance? He said when he entered the house of a Saint he *demand*ed refreshment. I wished to know if the saints gave him money. He said, "Yes." "For what purpose?" I enquired. He replied, "For pen, ink, and paper." Believe these statements, who can: I cannot. He asserted that, if the Latter-day Saints were not right, the Bible was not true; and if they were not the true church, God had not a church in the world, nor ever would have! He declared that if I printed my lecture, I should bitterly repent it. He asked me if I could prove the assertions I had made in reference to the Book of Mormon. I gave him to undersand that what I had said, I had written, and what I had written, I should print; and it was for him to disprove my statements. I told him that he knew, in his own conscience that he was drawing largely on the credulity of the ignorant, and living upon the spoils; and that it was a pity he should be let loose upon society.

Since this interview, I am credibly informed that this precocious Elder, while haranguing his auditory, as if writhing under the wounds so recently inflicted on him, has applied to me the most opprobrious epithets. He has represented me as a "lion," and as an "ass." As these passages will undoubtedly meet the eye of Elder (alias Minor) Margetts, who is of the Melchisedec order, it may not be amiss to remind him, that at the simple roaring of a "lion" every beast that

prowls the desert trembles; and that even an “ass” once reproved and rebuked a mad and stupid prophet.

I am aware that the *expose* I have made, will incur the displeasure of certain individuals. My opponents will insult and hate me. The voice of calumny may cast out my name as odious. Epithets the most foul and mean will be applied to me in order to throw contempt upon my principles. My enemies will ransack their vocabularies for terms which may calumniate my character, and impugn my motives. But, conscious of the purity of my design, I see nothing in their menaces to unnerve my energies; if their object be to annoy me by personalities, I can assure them they will fail to do so; having lived sufficiently long in the world to treat personalities with indifference, and the authors with pity.

CHRISTIANS of every denomination,—be firm, be united, “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.” “Buy the truth, and sell it not.” There are two standards reared in the world—each standard has its banner, and each banner bears its respective motto; upon one is inscribed TRUTH, upon the other is emblazoned ERROR. Rally round the standard of Truth. Be resolved never to strike your colors. You may be told that unless you are baptised for the remission of sins, and receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands—that unless you believe in miraculous gifts, and identify yourselves with the Latter Day Saints—that unless you believe that Adam gave the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to Noah, and Noah to Moses, and Moses to Christ, and Christ to Peter, and Peter to Joseph Smith—your creed is based on a wrong foundation—you may be told that unless you are baptised for the dead, you evince no sympathy for your friends who are lost—that unless you abandon those doctrines which have made you “wise unto salvation,” and embrace those recently imported from America, you are in mystic Babylon, and will ultimately be destroyed.

Be not alarmed at such statements, treat them with utter indifference, pity the deluded propagators, and pray for such as are so weak as to believe them. Exchange not the gospel ship in which you have embarked for the one built by Jared with a HOLE IN THE BOTTOM. You have embraced a system of revealed truth, which is sufficient for every purpose—a system which has stood the test of ages. You are members of the church of Christ; of that church which has rode safely, like the ark of Noah, despite of the tide of opposition which has set in against it. Philosophers, magistrates, infidels, deists, generals, kings, noble and ignoble, learned and illiterate, have been marshalled for its destruction; every instrument which wit could invent and malice forge, has been brought into operation against it, but it has gone forth conquering and to conquer; it has gathered new strength from the battles it has won; and like the tempest beaten rock, which withstands the fury of the agitated ocean, and smiles at the non-availing wrath of the waves, so the church, founded on the Rock of Ages, views with complacency the malice of its enemies, and still growing and strengthening, raises its head amidst the clouds, piercing its way through the atmosphere, to regions of light and felicity, to the joy of angels, the grief of demons, the disappointment of enemies, the honor of Christ, the astonishment of friends, and the wonder of millions.

This--this is the Church to which you belong. And yet you are told by the gifted brethren, that there has been no true Church of Christ upon the earth for fourteen hundred years, and that all who have professed to be of the Church of God have been in error. If you are erring, it is in an heavenly region; if you are wandering, it is in fields of light. If you err, you err with the noble army of martyrs, who made a sacrifice of all for the sake of Christ, and who emulated each other in the high places of the field, and were fain to pluck the amaranthine crown of martyrdom from each others brow; the remembrance of their labors in the cause of truth will be as fragrant ointment poured forth, exhaling a perfume richer and more odoriferous than that which comes from

“ Arabia’s scented shore.”

You err with the great and good and wise of every nation; with men like these remain in error, rather than sink into the quagmire doctrines taught in the school of Mormonism.

“ Immortal truth  
Will stand the test when earth’s strong pillars bend,  
To ruin drop, and with the heavens decay!  
Who sides with Truth, in heaven is his reward—  
Unfading laurels shall adorn his brow;  
And honors such as God’s right hand bestows.”

And now may “ the God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”